



Oasis Academy Hobmoor

More Able Pupils Policy

This More Able Pupils policy reflects our duties to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. At Oasis Academy Hobmoor we have due regard for our duties under the Equality Act 2010, We will ensure that we: eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

From September 2014, a new National Curriculum has been in place. The staff at Oasis Academy Hobmoor have reviewed and adapted the curriculum in light of these changes.

Introduction

The DFE definition of “More Able students” are pupils who achieve or have the ability to achieve at a level significantly in advance of the average for their year group in their school. Nationally this is expected to be between 5 – 10 % of each group.

At Oasis Academy Hobmoor we will be identifying our most able pupils within each year group in order to provide a curriculum that is appropriate to the needs and abilities of all our children.

Aims and Objectives

Our school aims to:

- Provide all children with a challenging, extended and enriched curriculum
- Encourage all children to develop higher order thinking skills and at the same time opportunities for able children to work at their own level and pace, thus realising their potential
- Offer children opportunities to generate their own learning

According to our school ethos, we support the development of the whole child. We believe that some children have special abilities and talents and that the nurturing of these is our responsibility.

Definitions

The following areas have been identified as being the main areas of ability. We also seek to identify pupils who are not fulfilling their potential. Pupils may also be recognised as ‘Good all Rounders’.

A. Intellectual – English, Mathematics, Science and Humanities (Geography/History)

B. Artistic and creative – Art and Design, Music, Drama

C. Practical - Art and Design, Mechanical Ingenuity

D. Physical – Sport, P.E., Dance

E. Social – Personal and Interpersonal, Leadership Qualities

F. A pupil who could be recognised as more able but who is presently not reaching his or her full potential.

G. Exceptionally able- highly able with a ‘natural talent’ in different subjects and non-academic areas

H. Dual exceptionality- intellectually able or talented and also have additional needs (high cognitive function/Dyslexia/ ASD)

I. More able – a learner who has the potential/capacity for high attainment. They demonstrate high levels of performance in an academic area and are more able relative to their peers in their own year group/class.

J. Gifted – A child who shows exceptional ability in one or more areas.

K. Higher attaining – A child who achieves high outcomes in their performance. There is a difference between more able and higher attaining pupils and higher attainment is based purely on performance.

L. Underachieving more able learners – learners whose prior attainment demonstrates high levels of ability, but whose current performance fails to demonstrate this. Learners whose contributions suggest they are more able but this is not reflected in their written work or assessments.

M. – Achievement – the success of a learner and the progress made over time.

N. – Attainment – the standard of a learner’s work demonstrated by a test/assessment. How learners perform when tested.

Identification Strategies

Identification strategies for More able Pupils are part of day-to-day classroom provision ensuring suitable and effective provision for all pupils to access the whole curriculum. Identifying pupils as ‘more able’ is a complex task and one which should be widely discussed, evidenced and reviewed.

There are many ways in which teachers can identify children’s special abilities and talents, these include:

- NACE checklist for more able and exceptionally able
- NACE checklist (core and foundation subjects)
- Teacher observation and assessment
- Test and assessment results (e.g. Foundation Profile, KS1 and KS2 SATs, End of year Tests and assessments, end of unit assessments)

- Discussion with pupils/ self and peer group identification
- Discussion with other staff
- Information received from previous class / school
- Information from parents and carers

General Characteristics of More Able Learners

More able learners can display a range of characteristics or traits that can help to identify them as more able. They may be:

- Inquisitive, curious, alert and responsive to new ideas
- Quick/agile thinkers
- Have high self-motivation and can work well independently
- Able to demonstrate leadership skills and qualities
- Quick learners
- Good at reasoning
- Able to apply logical and analytical thinking
- Create connections between what they learn
- Able to memorise and follow complex directions quickly and easily
- Keen powers of observation
- Advanced vocabulary/verbally fluent/good self-expression
- Learned to read early, often before school age; rapid readers
- Good attention; concentrate and persevere for long periods if interested
- Dislike repetition of concepts and closed tasks; get bored easily
- Informed/show interest in ideas and concepts beyond their years
- Creative/imaginative; original ideas in problem-solving; may be artistic/musical
- Inclined to choose unusual but effective methods of working, perhaps using a different line of logic or jumping steps
- Learners who have a variety of interests/hobbies; read across a wide range of subjects
- Prefer verbal expression; reluctant to record things in writing
- Resent imposed timetable restrictions if interested in a task
- Perfectionists; may lean towards being obsessive

We need to remember that the More Able pupils children may:

- Be high achievers in one area but unexceptional (or below average) in others
- Exhibit poor social skills
- Show poor motivation
- Disguise their ability
- Have poor coordination or motor skills (e.g. handwriting)
- Have English as an additional language
- Have been identified as SEND or children with additional needs

Risks of underachievement

Underrepresented groups and/or individual learners who are at risk of, or are currently underachieving are continuously monitored by their class teacher and the more able lead.

Class teachers regularly monitor the progress of each pupil within the class and ensure that the appropriate support and challenge is in place for at-risk individuals.

More able learners who are at risk of underachieving are provided with individualised support. Teachers then identify whether this has made an impact on the learning and then further support or provision is provided again. This repeats to ensure that the risk of the more able learner underachieving is minimised.

The following strategies are used to help prevent the risk of underachievement:

- Observations of learners in class – what are they doing instead of working on a prescribed task?
- General or specific ability checklists – can illuminate patterns of abilities
- Opportunities for self-referral – learners can be keenly aware of their own under-performance
- Opportunities for peer-referral – it can be interesting and valuable to ask learners to put forward peers with abilities that might not seem immediately obvious
- Information from parents and others – what abilities are learners demonstrating at home or in out-of-school activities?
- Portfolios of work – provide a more rounded picture than single test results
- Trying out a range of new activities – exposure to new subjects and opportunities
- Formal referrals to professionals – sometimes an educational psychologist or therapist can uncover aspects hitherto hidden
- A pupil may go through times whereby they are failing to achieve. This is called episodic underachievement. This can act as an early warning system for teachers, so that provision can be put in place to prevent this underachievement becoming permanent.

Provision, Planning & Enrichment

We offer an enriched and differentiated curriculum for all children. This is achieved in the following ways:

- Regular use of enquiry based / problem solving activities that are as open ended as possible to allow for maximum differentiation by outcome and a variety of extension and enrichment activities.
- The use of The National Curriculum, including investigations (NRICH and NCETM) which encourage higher order thinking skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate.
- Extra provision outside the classroom where possible, such as a variety of clubs and activities. Also, opportunities are provided for the children to take part in interschool competitions and musical events.
- Staff are encouraged to participate in courses and events run by Birmingham LA and Oasis Community Learning, NACE and in school, INSET is provided (where appropriate) to raise the profile and move the school forward in its provision for more able pupils.

- Classroom provision is monitored through planning, schemes of work, samples of work, ALT assessment reports and observations where appropriate.
- Guided Group Maths and English sessions as well as supporting learning also extend the more able pupils.

Tracking & Assessment

- Teacher assessment and tests are two of the main ways in which we assess children's ability. Either formatively or summatively
- This use of assessment helps to track the performance of individuals and sub-groups at the academy and also aids in ensuring more able learners are continuously progressing in their talent field/s.
- Formative assessment results are compared across the Oasis trust nationally and against national outcomes.
- Each exceptionally able learner has their own portfolio that they work within to demonstrate and practise their skill set. They rehearse and present their skill sets in the form of a presentation in front of the Principal and More Able Coordinator at the academy.
- The school operates a More Able Pupil register and shadow list. Teachers update and review this information termly.
- Staff hold annual transition meetings where pupil outcomes, skill sets and bespoke provision is discussed, planned and transferred to the new teacher. Teachers work closely within and across phases at school to ensure that pupil needs are communicated regularly and the appropriate provision is provided to each pupil skill set.

Curriculum, teaching and learning

At Oasis Academy Hobmoor we strive for excellence in all that we provide for the pupils and staff.

Our academy ethos is built around providing exceptional education at the heart of the community. We want to ensure that all of our young people, whatever their starting points or background, get the education they deserve - and they deserve nothing less than exceptional.

We teach pupils to:

- Strive to every challenge that they are faced with.
- To persevere and use strategies that they can use to work through a difficult task.
- Enhance and deepen learning further through carefully planned teaching and learning
- Set high and achievable aspirations in their learning.

Our curriculum is:

- Bespoke to the learners at the academy.
- Carefully organised and designed so that learning is built upon and deepened.

- Created to make connections across the curriculum to enhance the learning and retention of knowledge.
- Planned so that extended talk is built in to every lesson so that learners can extend their thinking through questioning and modelling.
- Supportive for all learners, with differentiated challenges in every lesson.
- Refined so that best practice is reviewed regularly through monitoring and CPD.

Personal, Social & Emotional Support

Despite our more able learners rising to a host of challenges throughout their learning, it is important to us that the wellbeing of our learners remains at the heart of everything that we do and is prioritised.

At Oasis Academy Hobmoor, we adopt a growth mindset for both pupils and staff alike. Our community is encouraged to persist with everything that they do, to learn from their mistakes and to rise to challenges in a positive manner. It is important for our staff to praise pupils regularly for all steps on their journey to success, so that they are encouraged to persevere in their learning.

To prevent more able learners developing a fixed mind set we:

- Adopt a consistent behaviour policy.
- Support staff in implementing actions and invest heavily in weekly professional development.
- Break down learning so that pupils understand how to build upon prior knowledge and strengthen connections in their neural pathways.
- Encourage learners to embrace challenge and make mistakes.
- Help learners regulate their emotions.

In addition to provision at school we also:

- Provide learners with homelearning opportunities to enhance and rehearse the knowledge that they have learnt in school.
- Regularly communicate with parents about how they can support at home.
- Provide parents with the opportunity to develop their own skill sets and gain qualifications in our Community Hub.
- Host parent workshops and aspire assemblies for parents to inform them how they can support more able children at home.
- Signpost parents of more able children to resources that will enrich their children.
- Explain how parents can support the social and emotional needs of their children and understand that the wellbeing and happiness of their child is at the forefront.
- Help parents to understand what healthy encouragement is and when this turns into unhealthy pressure and stress.

- Provide parents with definitions of the most commonly used terminology.

Leadership & Role of Co-ordinator

There is a designated lead coordinator for more able provision at Hobmoor.

The responsibilities of the coordinator include:

- Creating and maintaining the register of More Able pupils and shadow list
- Updating resources
- Undertaking training and professional development
- Familiarisation with current initiatives and research so as to keep staff informed
- Sharing good ideas and practise with staff, senior management and governors
- Identifying staff Inset needs, including those arising from Performance Management
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the school policy for More Able children and overseeing this element of the school's development plan.
- Delivering effective CPD fitting the needs of both pupils and staff at Oasis Acadmey Hobmoor.

Professional Development

Professional development is planned in every week at Hobmoor. The CPD is bespoke to our academy and fits the needs of the staff and pupils that we teach. CPD is delivered by members of staff who specialise within specific fields at school, or specialist organisations and guest speakers who are invited to deliver sessions both in person or remotely. Guest speakers from other Oasis academies within the trust also share best practice during CPD sessions.

In addition to CPD each colleague is provided with 1-2-1 weekly support from their phase leader and bespoke coaching to develop best practice in all staff members through the use of 'Green Time'. 'Green Time' is a weekly monitoring time where all of the senior leadership team are released to observe, support, coach and feedback to their teams. This is to enhance and enable staff to put their learning into practice from the CPD.

Staff members with the academy are given the opportunity to enrol on NACE courses so that they can develop their provision for their more able provision and all staff also receive regular training on how to enrich their more able provision and learning within their class.

Monitoring of this Policy

This policy is monitored, reviewed and updated termly and its effectiveness evaluated.

Monitoring of the action plans and policy allows for the academy to review the outcomes of the provision in place and amend the policy accordingly. It also enables the academy to promote learning and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the policy in place.

Once the policy has been reviewed, amendments are made and changes are communicated to all staff and governors, to enable best practice and provision for all learners, so that the whole-school ethos continues to provide challenge for all.

